

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ACCRA 03662 081153Z
ACTION SIL-01

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-10
LAB-04 NSAE-00 PA-01 AID-05 /040 W
-----041627 081334Z /62-43
R 081024Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY ACCRA
TO AMEMBASSY LAGOS
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 3501

C O N F I D E N T I A L ACCRA 3662

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: ELAB, NI, GH, US
SUBJ: AALC INTEREST IN NIGERIAN PROJECT

REF: LAGOS 5226

1. AS REQUESTED IN REFTTEL, FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS
FROM EMBASSY'S EXTENSIVE BIO FILE ON BENJAMIN A. BENTUM:
BENTUM WAS BORN IN 1931 AND ATTENDED AN AGRICULTURAL TRAINING
CENTER. HE STARTED HIS UNION ACTIVITY IN THE GENERAL AGRI-
CULTURAL WORKERS UNION, WHICH HE HEADED IN THE EARLY
1960'S. HE WAS IN PARLIAMENT DURING THE NKRUMAH PERIOD
AND WAS ALSO MINISTER OF FORESTRY, A NON-CABINET POSITION,
UNDER NKRUMAH. THE NATIONAL LIBERATION COUNCIL GOVERN-
MENT THAT REPLACED NKRUMAH IN 1966 APPOINTED BENTUM AS
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE TRADES UNION CONGRESS, THE
ONLY LABOR CENTRAL IN GHANA. HE WAS LATER ELECTED TO
HEAD THE TUC.

2. AFTER THE CONGRESS WAS DISSOLVED BY THE BUSIA GOVERNMENT
IN SEPTEMBER, 1971, BENTUM ACCEPTED A POSITION WITH
THE ILO IN GENEVA. HE DID NOT RETURN TO GHANA TO RUN
FOR THE POSITION OF SECRETARY GENERAL WHEN THE TUC WAS
RECONSTITUTED IN APRIL 1972. A 1971 REPORT IN OUR FILES
DESCRIBES BENTUM AS A CUNNING INDIVIDUAL WHO DOES NOT
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ALWAYS SPEAK CANDIDLY. BENTUM IS A WESTERN-ORIENTED
TRADE UNIONIST WHO WAS CRITICAL OF NKRUMAH'S CONTROL
OF THE UNIONS FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES. SMITH

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NNN

Message Attributes

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